

## Governor McAuliffe Unveils Major Workforce Development Initiative

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Today, Governor Terry McAuliffe signed executive order 23 establishing “**The New Virginia Economy**” Workforce Initiative, which will be led by Secretary of Commerce and Trade Maurice Jones. This initiative seeks to overhaul our economy in four ways: increasing postsecondary education and workforce credentials, securing employment for veterans, aligning education with the needs of businesses, and diversifying the economy.

“By better aligning workforce supply to employer demands, we can implement common-sense solutions that will help ensure Virginia’s workers can get the skills they need for the jobs they want,” said **Governor McAuliffe**. “In order to remain globally competitive, it is critical that Virginia’s workers have the tools they need to succeed in a 21st century economy.”

“Talent development is the most important ingredient for economic growth of the Commonwealth,” said **Secretary of Commerce and Trade Maurice Jones**. “On behalf of the Governor, I am working with public and private sector entities involved in workforce development to ensure that Virginia is the leading state for attainment of credentials that matter to business, industry and economic prosperity.”

“The directive regarding Virginia’s veterans is another strong example of how the Governor is positioning the Commonwealth to be the most veteran and military friendly state in the Union,” said **Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs John Harvey**. “Not only does it reinforce current cross-collaborative efforts within state government for hiring veterans, it bolsters what will be an ever increasing pipeline of highly-trained, well-disciplined and leadership-ready employees for our burgeoning Virginia businesses--from the healthcare industry, to cyber security and IT, modeling & simulation and beyond. The Governor’s coordinated directives of greater outreach to Commonwealth businesses and easier veteran transition to a career in this new Virginia economy will be a positive and powerful economic boost to our state’s economic future.”

“The Governor’s new Workforce Initiative is a tremendous step forward in combining post-secondary public education with the needs of businesses and a diverse economy,” said **Secretary Holton**. “We can’t expect Virginia to have a world-class workforce if we’re not willing to provide the education and training citizens need for the careers of the 21st Century. The Governor’s plan is bold, ambitious, and just what the Commonwealth needs to remain competitive.”

The executive order includes several ambitious goals, such as the “Pathway to 50K” initiative which sets a target of 50,000 credentials, licensures, apprenticeships, and sub-baccalaureate degrees earned that meet the immediate needs of Virginia’s workforce.

The Governor also unveiled “The Patriot Pledge,” which will ask 10,000 businesses to sign a pledge of commitment to hiring more veterans. This pledge will help recruit veterans to the Commonwealth, where they can take advantage of the ample opportunities our state provides.

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[View the entire news release which includes text from the two Executive Orders](#) [1]

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